In the Claims:

1. (Twice Amended) A computer-implemented patent portfolio analysis method comprising:

retrieving a corpus of patent information from a database, said patent information including multiple claims from a plurality of patent documents;

automatically determining claim breadth metrics for the multiple claims;

associating a claim breadth metric with a claim and storing said associated claim breadth metric in a computer-readable dataset,

wherein a claim breadth metric which is associated with a claim is indicative of how broad the claim is.

8. (Twice Amended) A computer-implemented patent portfolio analysis method comprising:

providing user-prescribed categories which were specified by a user;

retrieving a corpus of patent information from a database, wherein the patent information is information from multiple patent documents;

analyzing said patent information to generate a category metric corresponding to user-prescribed categories; and

associating said category metric with said patent information and storing said associated metric in a computer-readable dataset.

11.   A computer-implemented patent portfolio analysis method comprising:

retrieving text of multiple claims from a computer-implemented data store, wherein the text of claims are from a plurality of patent documents;

automatically analyzing the text of the claims in order to generate claim breadth metrics for the claims, wherein a claim breadth metric that is associated with a claim is indicative of how broad the claim is [claim breadth of a claim],

wherein the claim breadth metrics are used to analyze the multiple claims.

23. A computer-implemented patent portfolio analysis method comprising:

retrieving patent information from a database, wherein the patent information is from a plurality of patent documents;

analyzing said patent information to generate category metrics; and

associating said category metrics with said patent documents and storing said associated metrics in a computer-readable dataset,

wherein said patent information includes claim text information to be analyzed and wherein said analyzing step includes:

defining an eigenspace representing a training population of training claims each training claim having associated training text;

representing at least a portion of said training claims in said eigenspace and associating a predefined category with each training claim in said eigenspace; and

projecting the claim text information to be analyzed into said eigenspace and associating with said projected claim text the predefined category of the training claim to which it is closest within the eigenspace.

Claim 25. Cancelled.

31.   A computer-implemented patent portfolio analysis apparatus comprising:

a database of patent documents containing text of claims;

a claim breadth analysis module that automatically analyzes the text of the claims in order to generate claim breadth metrics for the claims, wherein a claim breadth metric is indicative of claim breadth of a claim, wherein the claim breadth metrics are provided over an internet network for use in analyzing scope of the claims;

a cluster generator that analyzes patent information to generate category metrics for the patent documents, wherein clusters of patent documents are determined based upon the generated category metrics, wherein the clusters of patent documents are provided over an internet network for use in analyzing the patent documents.

32.   A computer-implemented patent portfolio analysis method comprising:

retrieving a corpus of patent information from a database, said patent information including the claim text of a plurality of claims;

automatically analyzing the claim text of said plurality of claims to generate and associate an individual claim breadth metric with each of said plurality of claims.

Remarks:

Claims 1-24 and 26-32 are presently pending in this application. By this amendment claims 1, 8 23 and 31 have been amended. Claim 25 has been cancelled. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

First the Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for taking her time to interview the application by telephone with co-inventor, John V. Biernacki., on March 11, 2003. Claims 1 and 8 as set forth in the above-presented claim amendments were sent to the Examiner by fax for